



Fit Business Tips of the Month

AUGUST

As the mercury rises, thoughts turn to cool and refreshing ways to combat the summer heat. Enjoying crisp, fresh vegetables and sweet, juicy fruits are a great way to boost your energy level and fuel your body during the sweltering days of summer.

Nothing says summer like peaches and green beans, August's fruit and vegetable of the month. Enjoy them now while they're at their peak!

QUICK AND SIMPLE TIPS

Food storage tricks: Hot weather can complicate workplace food storage. Whether or not you have access to a refrigerator, many summer fruits like peaches, plums, and nectarines will keep for a couple of days at room temperature. If you have a refrigerator at work, stock it with convenient snacks like baby carrots, celery sticks, sliced cucumber and grapes. You can also use an insulated bag to keep your lunch fresh. As an alternative to the candy dish, keep a bowl of fresh fruit at your desk and replenish every few days. Or stash a bag of dried fruit in your desk or car. Raisins, dried peaches, apricots, mangos and apples are all tasty traveling companions.

Get watered down: Need an afternoon pick-me-up? Skip the soda and coffee and drink water instead. Water keeps you hydrated and can even stave off hunger by making you feel full. If plain water isn't your thing, an *agua fresca*, literally "fresh water," is a great alternative. Make this simple and refreshing Mexican drink by pureeing any juicy fruit—think watermelon, honey dew melon, cantaloupe, mango—and mixing the strained juice with water. Add lime juice to taste. Concoct a batch at home, and then bring a pitcher of it to work.





August's Fruit of the Month

PEACH

Health Benefits

California peaches hit their peak during the summer months. An excellent source of vitamins A and C, peaches make a sweet, juicy and healthy snack or dessert. Including peaches in your low-fat diet along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables may reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Selection

With both white- and yellow-flesh varieties on the market, color may not be the best indicator of ripeness in peaches. Instead, look for aromatic fruit that yields when gently squeezed with your hand. Even better, ask your grocer to point you to fruit that has been "tree ripened." Avoid fruit that is green or has bruised or wrinkled skin.

Storage

Never store peaches in the refrigerator until they're ripe and soft to the touch. To ripen firm fruit, place inside a paper bag, fold loosely, and wait one to three days until the fruit yields when gently squeezed with your hand. You can speed the process by adding a banana or apple to the bag. Once ripened, peaches can be stored in the refrigerator for about a week.

Preparation Ideas

Wash peaches carefully in cool water, then rinse well before eating. To enjoy the best flavor, serve peaches at room temperature. Peaches are delicious on their own or sliced over low-fat yogurt or ice cream, over cereal or as part of a summer fruit salad.

FEATURED PEACH RECIPE: PEACH CRISP

Ingredients

- 4 nonstick cooking spray
- (15-ounce) cans sliced peaches
- in 100% juice, well drained
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup old fashioned oats
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup prepared baking mix
- 3 tablespoons margarine

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Spray 9-inch square baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Pour peaches into prepared pan.
4. In a small bowl, stir in cornstarch, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, and vanilla; pour over peaches.
5. In a large bowl, combine remaining cinnamon, oats, brown sugar, baking mix, and margarine.
6. Mix together with a fork until crumbly; sprinkle over peaches.
7. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until peach juice is thick and bubbly and topping is lightly browned.

Makes 9 servings. 1 cup per serving.

Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 200, Carbohydrate 43g, Protein 3g, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 100mg, Dietary Fiber 3g

Recipe courtesy of *Discover the Secret to Healthy Living* and *California 5 a Day Campaign*





August's Vegetable of the Month

GREEN BEANS

Health Benefits

Green beans are a great source of fiber and vitamins A and C. Including green beans in your low-fat diet along with a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables may reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

Selection

It is best to handpick green beans from a market that sells them loose. To ensure uniform cooking time, be sure to select beans of similar size. A good rule of thumb is to pick crisp, brightly colored green beans that are no thicker than a pencil and free of blemishes. Avoid beans that are rubbery; the freshest beans will snap when bent.

Storage

Store green beans in a perforated plastic bag in your refrigerator's crisper. Green beans taste best when used within two to three days, though they can last up to five days with proper storage.

Preparation Ideas

Wash thoroughly and snip off the stem end by hand or with a knife. To preserve their texture, don't overcook green beans; they should be tender but firm. Try steaming green beans or adding them to your favorite stir-fry. Green beans are naturally low in sodium, so to take advantage of this and flavor with basil, dill, marjoram, oregano or thyme.

FEATURED GREEN BEAN RECIPE: CREOLE GREEN BEANS

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh green beans
- 2 small cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ½ teaspoon hickory salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Preparation

- 1. Wash green beans and cut in half.
- 2. In a large skillet, sauté garlic in oil over low heat for 1 minute.
- 3. Add green beans and bell pepper; increase heat to medium and cook for 5 minutes more.
- 4. Stir in remaining ingredients; cook for an additional 5 minutes.

Makes 8 servings. ¾ cups per serving.

Nutrition Information Per Serving

Calories 32, Carbohydrate 6g, Protein 1g, Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 161mg, Dietary Fiber 2g

Recipe courtesy of *Discover the Secret to Healthy Living* and *California 5 a Day Campaign*.

